

# SENATE MANAGED CARE LEGISLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to encourage our House leadership to bring the Patients' Bill of Rights to the floor as soon as possible, hopefully next week.

The Senate took historic steps before the July 4 recess to pass a bipartisan, meaningful Patients' Bill of Rights. The McCain-Kennedy compromise legislation includes strong patient protections that will ensure high quality health care for millions of Americans with private health insurance coverage.

These protections include:

Access. Patients will be able to go directly to specialists. Women have the right to go to their OB-GYNs, and children directly to their pediatricians.

Communication. The Senate bill eliminates gag clauses which prohibit doctors from discussing all the treatment options, even those not covered by the plan, with their patients.

Emergency room care for patients who reasonably believe that they are suffering from an emergency medical condition, so they do not have to drive by an emergency hospital to go to the one that is on their list.

Internal-external appeals, which ensures that patients have access to timely and appropriate health care.

And probably the most important is accountability if an HMO's denial or delay of treatment causes a person's injury or death.

Many critics of this legislation say it would result in an onslaught of frivolous and expensive litigation, but this compromise bill also included many provisions to prevent such lawsuits from taking place.

For example, the legislation requires patients to exhaust all their appeal procedures before they can sue their health plan. By requiring that patients utilize an independent review panel, the bill makes sure that medical decisions are made in the best interests of medical practice in a timely manner.

In my home State of Texas, we have been using independent review organizations, or IROs, as we call them, to resolve HMO and patient coverage disputes since 1997, 4 years. These IROs are made up of experienced physicians who have the capability and the authority to resolve disputes for cases involving medical judgment.

These provisions have been successful not only because they protect patients, but also because they protect the insurers. Plans that comply with the independent review organization's decision cannot be held liable for punitive damages if they do go to court.

This plan has worked well. Since 1997, more than 1,000 patients and physicians have challenged the decisions of HMO plans. The independence of this process is demonstrated by its fairly

even split. Of this about 1,000 appeals, in only 55 percent of these cases did the IRO fully or partially reverse the decision of that HMO.

The Senate legislation protects employers from unnecessary litigation.

Let me go back to the independent review organizations. Fifty-five percent of the time, these IROs found that there was something wrong with the HMO's decision. I would hope that our medical decisions have a better percentage than to flip a coin, so in 55 percent of the cases in Texas, either partially or totally the HMO was reversed by the independent review organization.

The bill goes so far because it protects employers against any liability unless they are directly participating in the decision on a claim for benefits which result in personal injury or death.

The bill specifically lists a number of areas that are not considered direct participation. In other words, as an employer, one could select the health plan, choose benefits to be covered under the plan, buy a Cadillac plan or a Chevrolet plan, and the employer would not be sued for that, or for advocating with the health plan on behalf of the beneficiary for coverage.

I know in my own experience as a small business, oftentimes my biggest problem was advocating for our employees with our health insurance plan to say it should be covered.

The only case where an employer would be liable would be if they choose to make medical decisions which harm or kill a patient. If the employer acts like a doctor, then the McCain-Kennedy bill hold them responsible like a doctor.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned earlier, we have had many of these same provisions in Texas law now for 4 years. Yet, we have not seen a barrage of frivolous lawsuits, nor have insurance premiums risen at a faster rate than anywhere else in the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, the Dingell-Ganske bill here in the House is very similar to the McCain-Kennedy bill, which is very similar to a law that we have had on the books in Texas for 4 years. It contains many of the same compromise provisions, which at the same time ensure that these protections can be enforced.

It is time that the House followed suit and passed a real, meaningful, strong, bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights. I urge the leadership not to delay in bringing the Dingell-Ganske bill to the floor for a vote.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WELDON of Florida addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

## GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members have 5 days to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

## THE LEGACY OF CALIFORNIA STATE SUPREME COURT JUSTICE STANLEY MOSK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WATSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATSON of California. Mr. Speaker, today I stand before this august body to pay tribute to a superb colleague, friend, and fighter for justice, the late Honorable California State Supreme Court Justice Stanley Mosk.

As a State Supreme Court Justice, Stanley Mosk fought repeatedly for civil rights and individual liberties. He constantly strove for fairness for all Californians. Judge Mosk did not view his judicial task as a job, but as a mission for humanity. Judge Mosk understood the pain of racism.

It was during his election to statewide office that his faith was made an issue. Judge Mosk, as a Los Angeles Superior Court judge, threw out a restrictive real estate covenant that prevented a black family from moving into a white neighborhood. A year later, the U.S. Supreme Court voided such covenants.

It was Judge Mosk's ability to relate to the pain caused by racism that allowed him to approach legal decisions with a touch of humanity and fairness.

Even before his career as a judge, Mosk had the ability to tell the difference between right and wrong. As a State Attorney General in the late 1950s and early 1960s, he established the office's civil rights division, and helped to persuade the Professional Golfer's Association to drop its whites-only rule.

Judge Mosk, a longtime Democrat and self-described liberal, was appointed to the State's highest court in 1964 and served until his death, a 37-year tenure that made him the State's longest-serving Justice. During that time, he wrote 1,500 opinions.

Judge Mosk often produced opinions separate from the court majority. He opposed the death penalty, but also showed flexibility and a knack for anticipating political currents. His decisions continued to reflect his quest for fairness and the desire to correct existing wrongs.

In 1972, Judge Mosk's ruling extended to private developers a law requiring a study of each major project's likely environmental impact and ways to avoid the harm.

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In 1978, Judge Mosk ruled to ban racial discrimination in jury selections.

He rendered this decision 8 years before the U.S. Supreme Court made the same decision. In light of his judicial decisions and opinions, Judge Stanley Mosk remained a champion for fairness and humanity.

Today, I am honored as a Californian and as a former State Senator to pay homage to the career and the legacy of this great man.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I speak today to honor a man who was a tribute to his court, his state, and his nation. Justice Stanley Mosk of the California State Supreme Court leaves behind a legacy of his strong belief in civil rights and free speech. It is my hope that Governor Gray Davis will seek out another advocate for the people to step into Justice Mosk's shoes.

Justice Mosk will be remembered for many things. He was often on the forefront of legal issues. Back in 1947, when he was a judge on the Los Angeles Superior Court, Justice Mosk threw out a racially restrictive covenant that prevented a black family from moving into a white neighborhood. That case, *Wright v. Drye*, came out a year before the United States Supreme Court made its own similar decision in *Shelley v. Kramer*.

In 1978, Justice Mosk again led the U.S. Supreme Court in ground-breaking decisions. In that year, he ruled for a ban on racial discrimination in jury selection. The U.S. Supreme Court waited eight years before making the same ruling.

Justice Mosk promoted civil rights from an early stage in his career. While serving as the California State Attorney General in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Justice Mosk established the office's civil rights division. He also successfully fought against the Professionals Golfers' Association bylaws that denied access to minority golfers. Justice Mosk went further than that—actually contacting each state's attorney general on this matter, to ensure that no state would provide the PGA with a place to hide. Charlie Sifford, the African-American golfer whose cause Justice Mosk took up, sent a note to the Mosk family after hearing of Justice Mosk's death.

Justice Mosk worked to improve voting rights long before the disasters that occurred in last year's election. He fought successfully for Latino voting rights in the 1960 election in Imperial Valley. He did what we should do in our present day elections—he sent agents down to the Valley to be sure that the voters weren't being intimidated.

Justice Mosk was also an extremely productive judge, producing nearly 1700 rulings during his tenure on the California State Supreme Court.

The State of California has lost not only a great justice and strong advocate, but a true legacy. His presence will be missed by those who worked with him, and his absence will be felt by those on whose behalf he worked.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I wish to pay tribute to a renowned man who has had a tremendous impact on our country. "Libertas per Justitiam"—Liberty through Justice, was a phrase that Justice Mosk had sewn into the collar of his judicial robes. It is a fitting inscription for a man who embodied the phrase so completely. We come today to reflect on the life and legacy of Justice Stanley Mosk of the California Supreme Court. Justice Mosk spent more than half a century on the

bench, including 37 years as a justice of the California Supreme Court. During his time on the bench, Justice Mosk dedicated his life to ensuring and protecting individual rights for the people of California. He remained steadfast in his liberal views, despite serving the last fourteen years as the only liberal on the high court.

Justice Mosk's distinguished career began immediately after law school with his own private practice from 1935 to 1939. He then became Executive Secretary to the Governor, and later served as Attorney General of California for nearly six years before his tenure on the bench. Despite the often-contradictory opinions of his colleagues, Justice Mosk never backed down from what he believed to be fair and just.

I would like to take a moment to highlight a couple of his important achievements. In 1947, as a Los Angeles Superior Court judge, he struck down as unconstitutional the racially restrictive real estate covenants used to prevent minorities from buying houses in certain neighborhoods. When he became Attorney General in 1958, he fought to eradicate the Professional Golfers Associations whites-only clause, which prohibited minorities from being a part of the PGA. Justice Mosk remained an unassuming and unpretentious man who took pride in his judicial activities as well as his civic activities. For instance, he was involved actively with the problems of children who could not live with their families, as the president of the Vista Del Mar-Child Care Agency.

Justice Mosk served the state of California until the day before he died, and with his death, the state of California lost what many considered to be a true champion of justice. Justice was not only his well deserved title, but was also characteristic of his personal mission—to find fairness in a world filled with injustice. As a devoted liberal, his eloquence and principles shined through his work on the court. Among his many great contributions he will be remembered for pioneering the theory of "independent state grounds." This is the source of many path-breaking state privacy rulings and has given states the chance to become agents for legal change.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand here today to honor Justice Stanley Mosk, a glorious man who has left an indelible impression on our state and our country. Through his body of accomplishments his passion for justice shall live beyond his tenure on earth. His family, friends, colleagues, and the state of California will miss him dearly.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Justice Stanley Mosk, who died last month after serving 37 years on the California Supreme Court. He was California's longest serving Justice, a highly respected, even revered judge who delivered almost 1,700 opinions in his remarkable career. He was repeatedly honored for his contributions to the caliber of our judiciary and the quality of justice meted out by our courts in California. He was a distinguished lawyer, a renowned author and an outstanding jurist.

I have had the honor of knowing Justice Mosk and his family for many years and he was, to me, one of those special people who had a profound influence on my political life. He was a tremendously impressive individual who embodied a unique combination of political savvy and legal scholarship with an abiding commitment to justice.

From 1939 to 1942 he served as executive secretary and legal adviser to the Governor of California, and for the 16 years from 1943 to 1959 he was a judge of the Superior Court in Los Angeles. After serving in the Coast Guard Temporary Reserve during the early days of World War II, Judge Mosk left the Superior Court bench and enlisted in the army as a private. He served until the end of the war and then returned to the court.

In 1958, Mosk was elected Attorney General of California with more than a million vote margin over his opponent, the largest majority of any contest in America that year. He was overwhelmingly re-elected in 1962.

He was the first person of the Jewish faith to be elected to a statewide office after a campaign in which his religion was made an issue and his decisive victories were enormously important to Jewish candidates who followed him into public service, because it established the fact that their religion would not be a factor in California elections.

He was appointed to the state's high court in 1964 by then-Governor Pat Brown. Justice Mosk loved being on the court and hated the thought of retirement, but fearing that his age was slowing him down, he had reluctantly decided to step down this year. He died the day he planned to submit this resignation letter to Governor Davis.

Justice Mosk fought doggedly for civil rights and individual liberties. He threw out restrictive real estate covenants that kept black families out of white neighborhoods and opened professional golf to nonwhites. He barred prosecutors from removing jurors on racial grounds. He declared that handicapped parents could not be stereotyped and automatically disqualified from raising their own children.

He was revered for his independence as well as his intelligence, his dedication to equal justice and his wisdom and common sense.

In November of 1998, Justice Mosk offered this list of his top priorities should he be re-elected to the Supreme Court: (1) Properly apply the law, (2) Independence and impartiality, and (3) Justice. He can be no better eulogized than by this short list, which he honored throughout his brilliant career. I ask my colleagues to join me today in paying tribute to Justice Stanley Mosk, a legal giant of California.

#### COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN LABELING FOR FARM-RAISED FISH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OSBORNE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, the farm-raised catfish industry is an important part of the economy in my congressional district that covers the southern third of Arkansas. In fact, Arkansas is third in catfish sales in the Nation, behind only Mississippi and Alabama, with nearly \$66 million, or 13 percent, of the total U.S. sales.

I recently met with catfish farmers in southeast Arkansas, and I can tell my colleagues that catfish producers in my district are upset that so-called catfish are being dumped into our markets from Vietnam and sold as farm-